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Insights into hours worked, February 2022

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Source: [Labour Force, Australia, February 2022](#)

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The ABS will continue to publish this additional analysis on a monthly basis until labour market conditions return to a more usual state.

The February survey reference period was from 30 January to 12 February 2022. Disruption across the labour market had continued with large numbers of COVID cases associated with the Omicron variant.

Hours worked increased by 8.9% (in seasonally adjusted terms) between January and February 2022, while employment increased by 0.6%. The large rise in seasonally adjusted hours worked followed an 8.6% decrease in January when an unusually large number of people were sick or on leave.

Chart 1 shows that after the increase in February 2022, hours worked remained 0.5% below the level reached in December 2021 and 0.2% below the pre-Delta COVID variant high of May 2021.

Chart 1: Hours worked and employment index, Seasonally adjusted (March 2020 = 100.0)



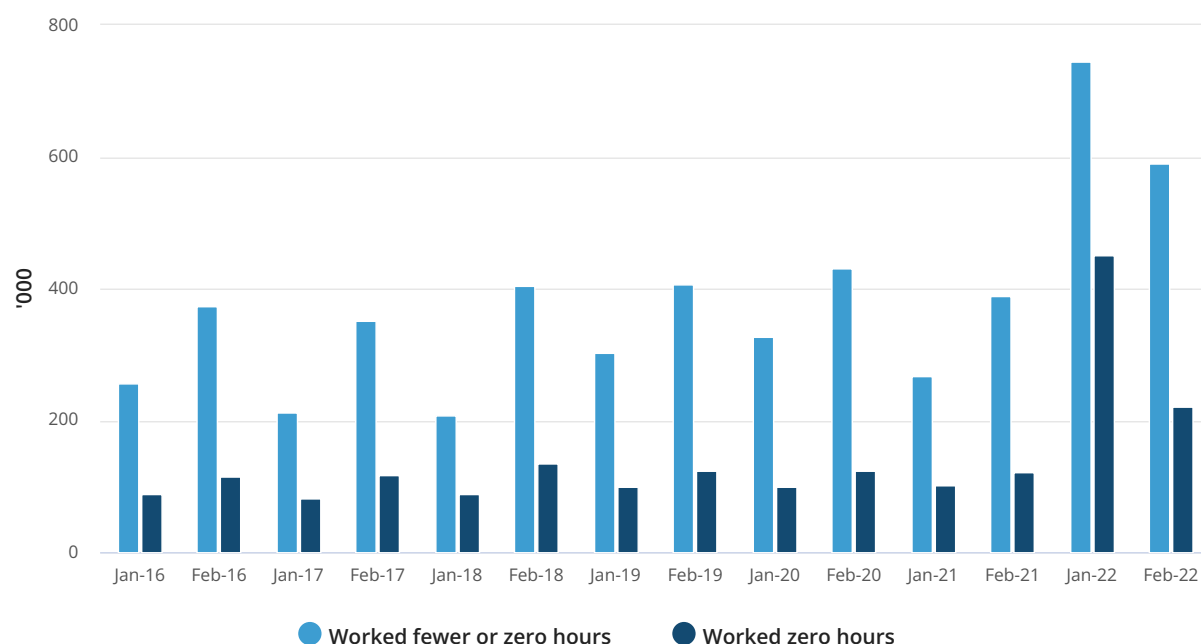
Source: Labour Force, Australia Tables 1 and 19

People working fewer hours due to own illness, injury or sick leave

Chart 2 shows there continued to be a higher than usual number of people working reduced or no hours due to illness or sick leave in February. There were 590,000 people working fewer or zero hours due to their own illness, injury or sick leave. This was around 50% higher than the average of the previous six Februarys.

The increase in people working no hours at all during the week because they were sick in February was 221,800, about 80% higher than the previous six Februarys.

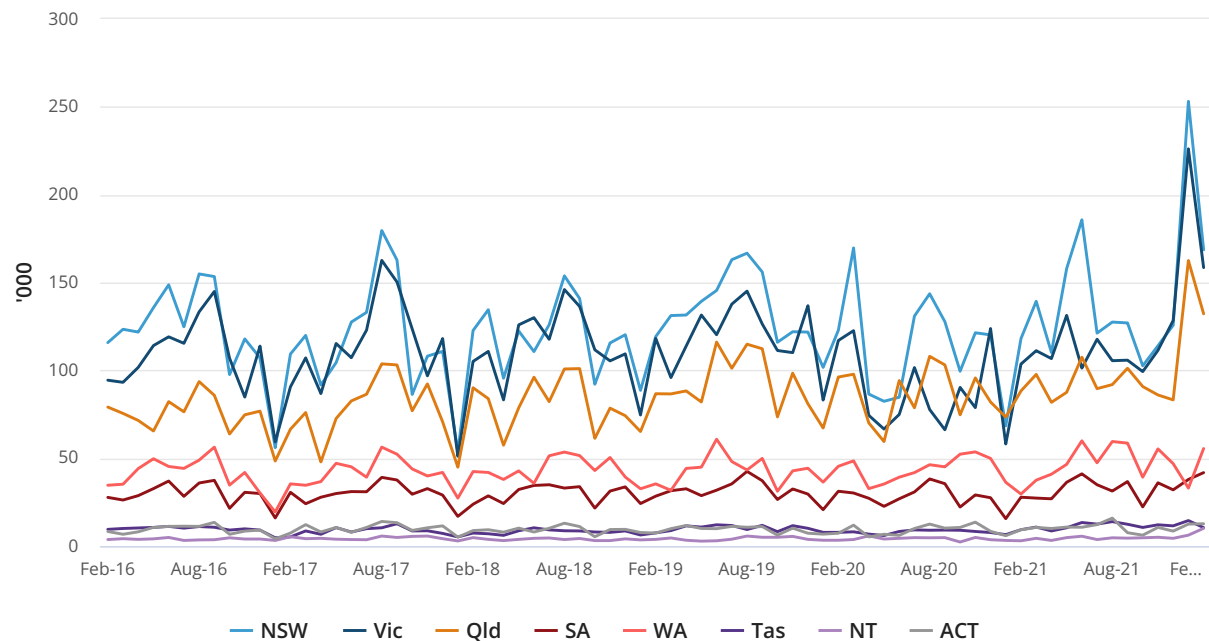
Chart 2: Employed people who worked fewer or zero hours due to own illness, injury or sick leave, Original



Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2a

Chart 3 shows a decrease between January and February in the number of people who worked fewer hours, or no hours at all, due to their own illness, personal injury or sick leave, particularly in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. These three states continued to have noticeably higher than usual levels of people working fewer hours, or no hours at all due to their own illness, personal injury or sick leave.

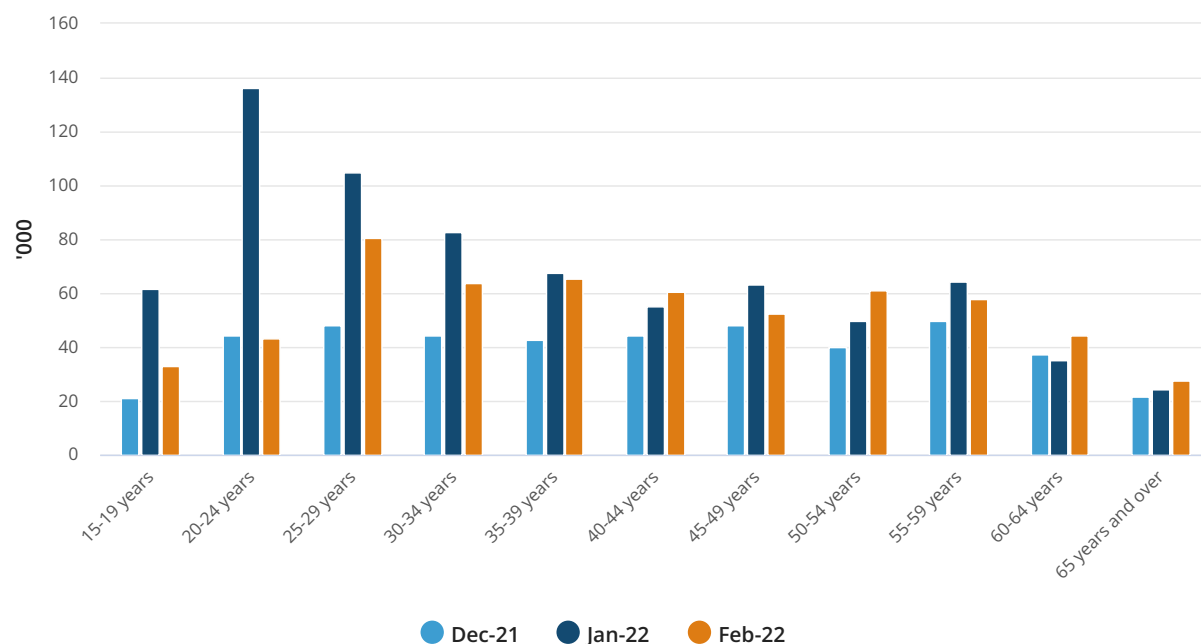
Chart 3: People working fewer than their usual hours due to own illness, personal injury or sick leave, Original



Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2b

Chart 4 shows a large decrease between January and February in the number of people in the younger age groups who worked fewer hours, or no hours at all, due to their own illness, personal injury or sick leave.

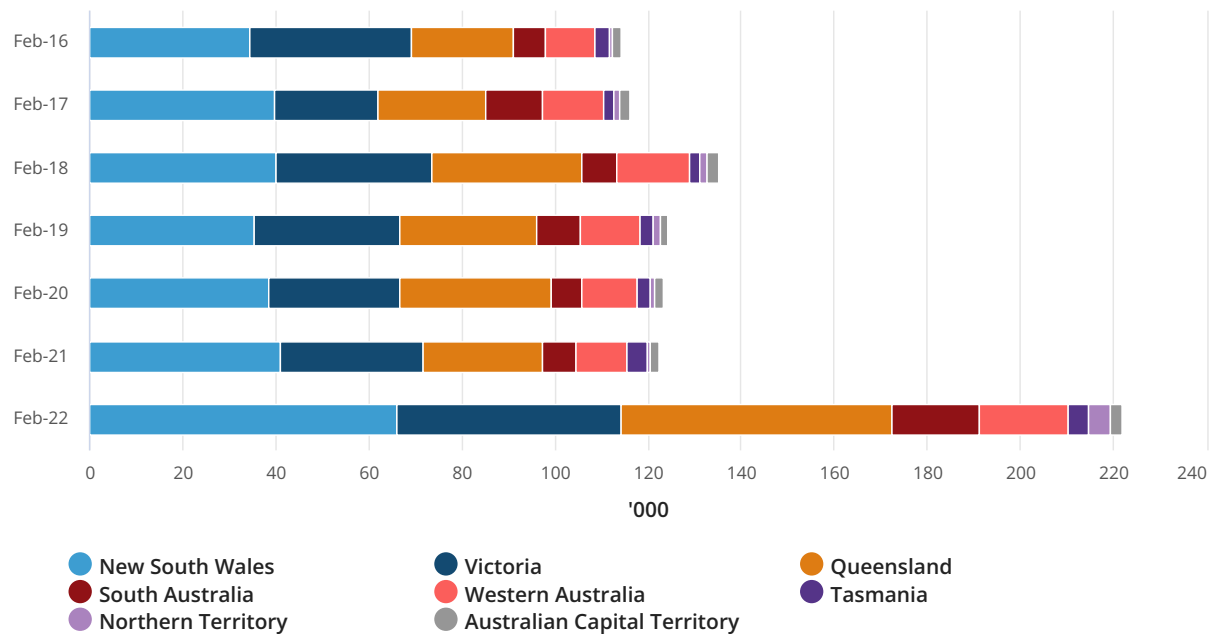
Chart 4: People working fewer than their usual hours due to own illness, personal injury or sick leave, Original



Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2a

Chart 5 shows the higher than usual number of employed people who were away from work for the entire week due to their own illness, personal injury or sick leave in February 2022, in all states and territories, compared with the previous six Februarys.

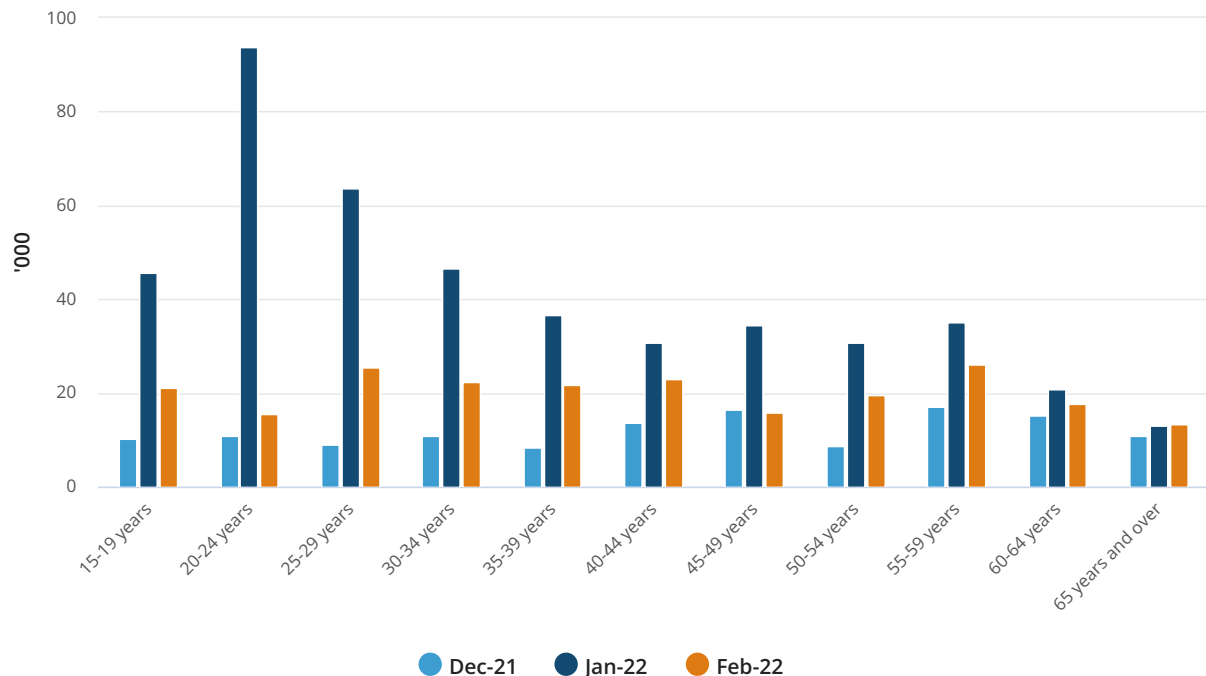
Chart 5: Employed people working zero hours due to own illness, personal injury or sick leave, Original



Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2b

Chart 6 shows the number of people who were away from work for the entire week due to their own illness, injury or sick leave decreased across all age groups, except for people aged 65 and over. The decrease was largest in the younger age groups. Collectively, the number of affected people aged 15 to 39 years fell by 63.0% between January and February, compared with 29.7% for people aged 40 years and over.

Chart 6: Employed people working zero hours due to own illness, injury or sick leave, Original

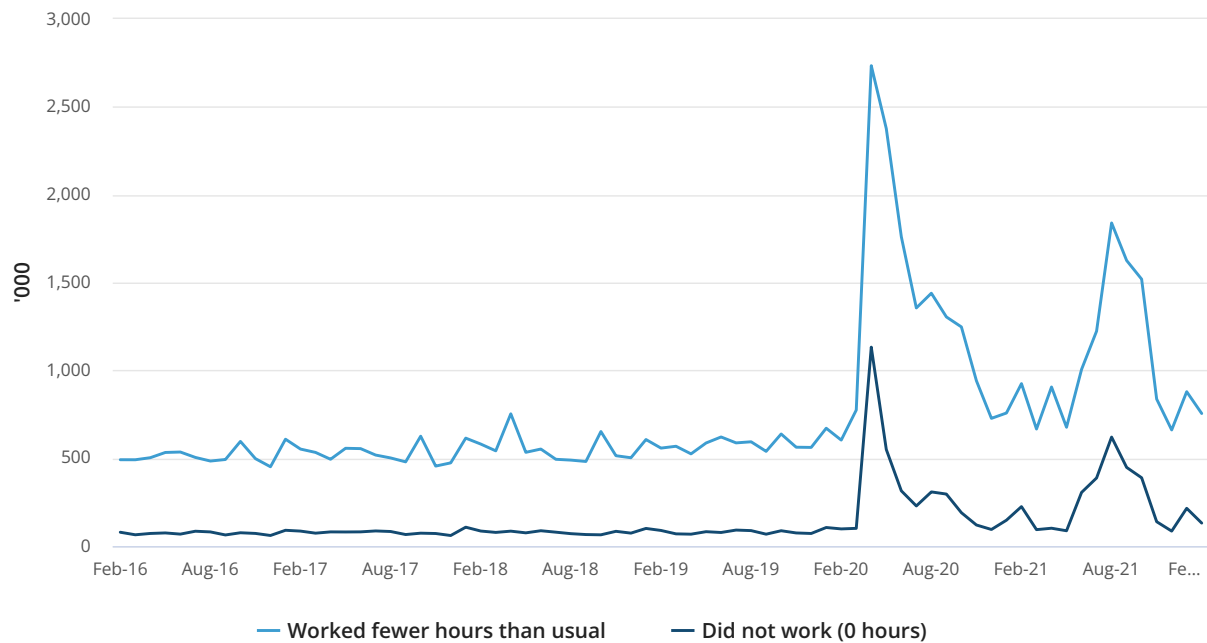


Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2a

People working fewer hours for economic and other reasons

Chart 7 shows that the number of people working fewer or no hours for economic and 'other' reasons decreased in February 2022, but remained higher than the pre-pandemic period. These are two groups of reasons for working reduced hours where COVID-related impacts have been particularly evident during the pandemic, especially around lockdowns and other COVID-related restrictions.

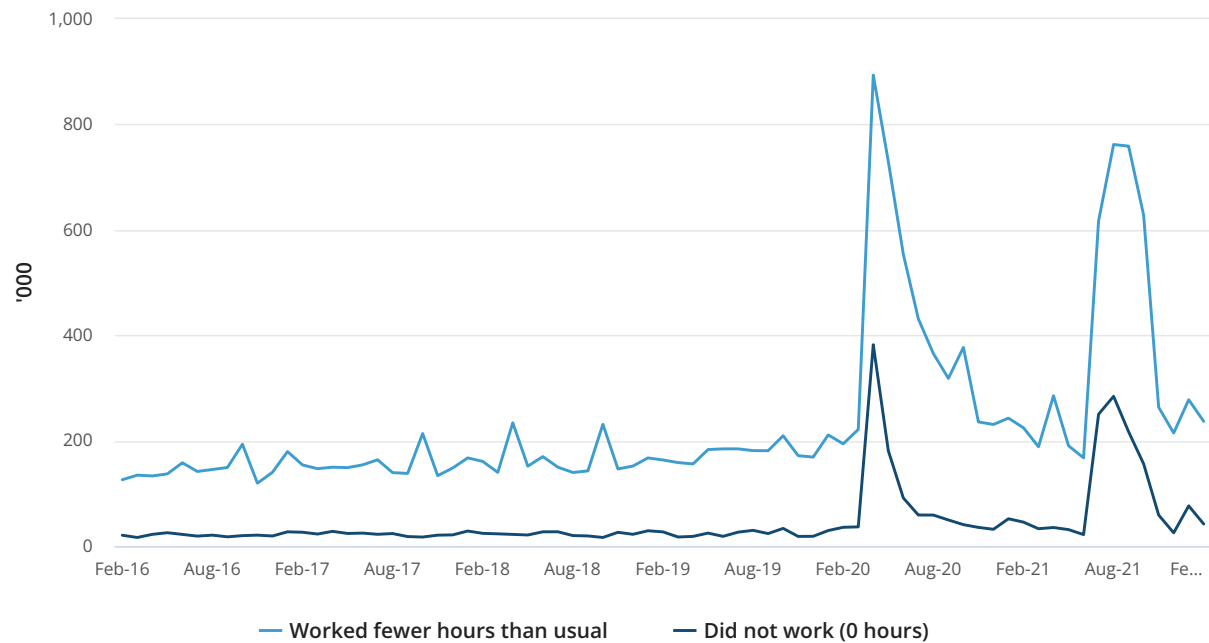
Chart 7: No work, not enough work available or stood down & Worked fewer hours than usual for other reasons, Original



Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2a

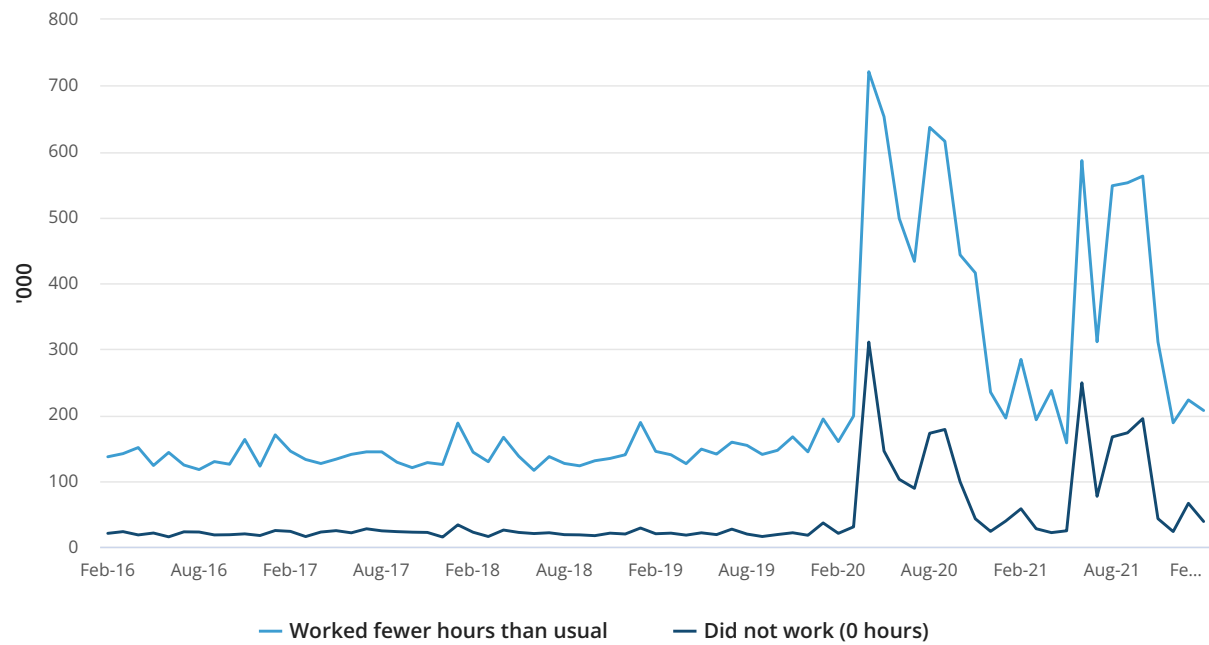
Charts 7a, 7b and 7c show that this was also seen in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

Chart 7a: No work, not enough work available or stood down & Worked fewer hours than usual for other reasons, NSW Original



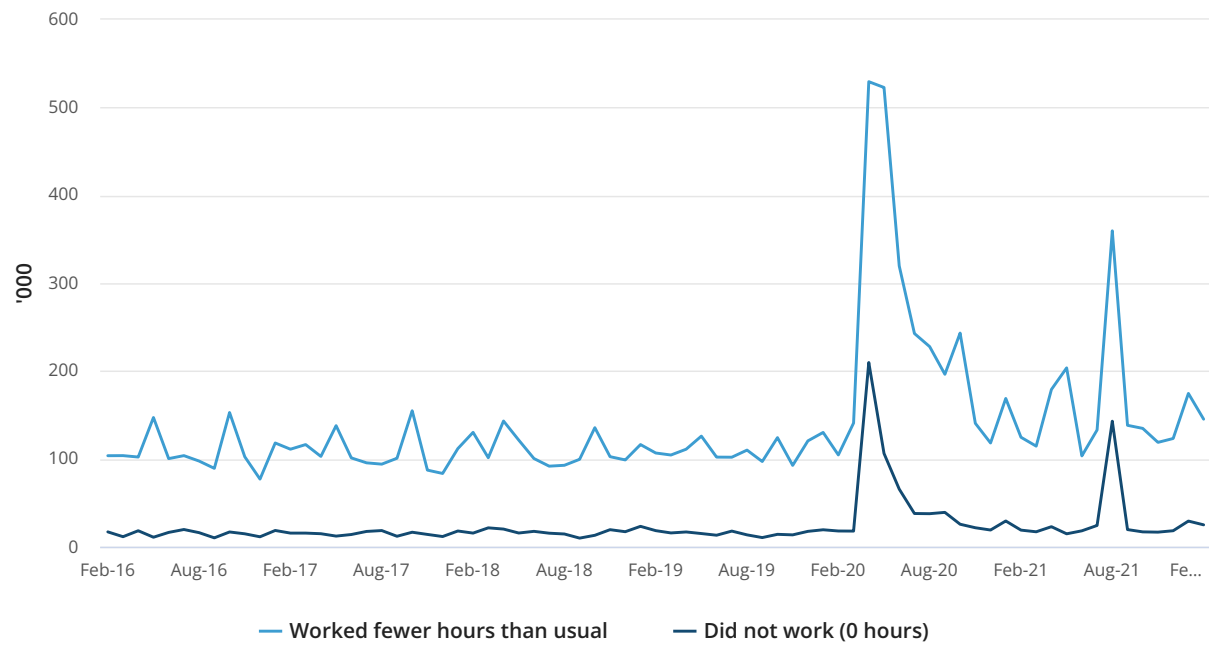
Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2b

Chart 7b: No work, not enough work available or stood down & Worked fewer hours than usual for other reasons, Victoria, Original



Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2b

Chart 7c: No work, not enough work available or stood down & Worked fewer hours than usual for other reasons, Queensland, Original



Source: Labour Force, Australia Data Cube EM2b